



Wasena

NEIGHBORHOOD Plan

Adopted by City Council
September 15, 2003

ROANOKE
VIRGINIA



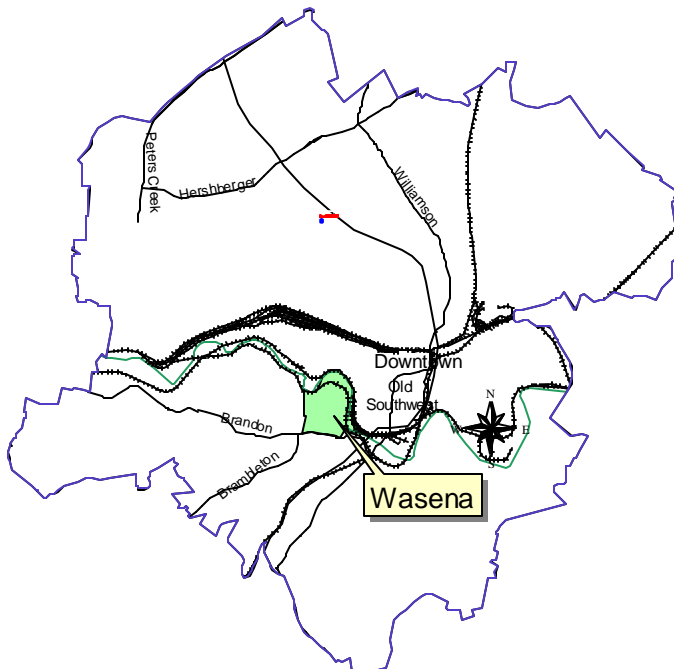
Contents:

Introduction	1
Priority Initiatives	2
Community Design	7
Residential Development	11
Economic Development	14
Infrastructure	18
Public Services	22
Quality of Life	23
Recommendations	25
Implementation	33
Acknowledgments	36

Planning Building & Development

Introduction

Wasena was one of Roanoke's early suburbs, and has maintained virtually the same character as when it was developed in the 1920s. Since its inception the neighborhood has been one of the most stable communities in the City. Wasena is located southwest of downtown and is bounded by the Roanoke River to the north and east, Greater Raleigh Court to the west, and Brandon Avenue to the south. 'Wasena' in a Native American language translates as "beautiful view." The neighborhood has an undulating terrain that provides great views of downtown Roanoke, Old Southwest, and Mill Mountain. While it was termed a suburb when the land was first subdivided, it is now a traditional urban neighborhood that combines the convenience of the City with an appropriate scale of development and good quality of life. It is only a 20-minute walk from downtown. It is centrally located, convenient to Grandin Village, downtown, Mill Mountain, and Towers Mall, and is home to one of the City's largest and most frequented parks. Wasena has a solid core of long-term homeowners as well as a more transient population of renters. There is also an increasingly diverse mix of people of different backgrounds and age groups. With real estate values escalating in much of the valley as homebuyers search for houses with large front and back yards, Wasena is a hidden treasure that maintains a healthy balance of community, comfort, tradition, convenience, diversity and value.



Priority Initiatives

The plan proposes four priority initiatives:

Zoning:

Based on the Future Land Use Map:

- Maintain a zoning district similar to the current RM-1 in residential areas in the update of the zoning ordinance.
- Expand the variety of uses in the current industrial district to allow for a mix of commercial and high-density residential opportunities.
- Amend the zoning ordinance to ensure that new residential development is compatible with existing structures in terms of setbacks and lot coverage, and to maximize the development potential of vacant properties and structures.
- Regulate the conversion of single-family homes to multifamily by requiring a special exception permit to ensure that compatibility with the existing neighborhood is maintained.

Housing:

- Encourage a continuation of the neighborhood's current residential mix of single-family, duplex, and multifamily structures.

Economic Development:

- Market the Main Street village center with particular emphasis on:
 - o Small-scale buildings with 2-3 stories.
 - o Neighborhood commercial uses with minimal noise and lighting impacts.
 - o Shared parking arrangements, including public/private partnerships.
- Target the former ice and cold storage building and industrial district for adaptive reuse. Considerations for redevelopment will include:
 - o Zoning that allows for flexibility in permitting a vibrant mix of commercial and residential uses, particularly live/work space.
 - o High-tech or other industrial uses that have a minimal environmental and neighborhood impact.
 - o Possibilities for public/private partnerships.

Infrastructure:

- Implement traffic-calming measures and gateway improvements on both ends of Main Street.



People



The population for Wasena decreased between 1990 and 2000 by 3 percent. The number of households increased slightly, indicating the national trend towards smaller households. The neighborhood has increased in racial diversity. While white residents comprise 91% of the population, the number of black residents almost doubled since the 1990 Census. The decrease in the number of "other race" residents from the 1990 census is probably explained by the Census Bureau adding a new "two or more races" category to the 2000 Census. Because of the different classifications of the Census, in Table 1 below, the category "other," encompasses races other than black and white and all multiracial categories.

The neighborhood has a healthy age distribution. Between 1990 and 2000, the number of children and teenagers increased, while the number of younger adults decreased. More dramatically, the middle-aged adult population increased 20%, while the number of elderly decreased 40%.

Table 1. Population Demographics

	1990	2000	Percentage Change
Total Population	1,685	1,633	-3%
Households	764	769	1%
White	1,595	1,480	-7%
Black	54	103	91%
Other Races & Multiracial	36	25	-31%
Two or more races	n/a	25	n/a
0-19 Years Old	337	370	10%
20-34 Years Old	554	477	-14%
35-64 Years Old	520	633	20%
65 Years and Over	255	153	-40%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 and 2000 Census

Though the number of young adults decreased between 1990 and 2000, compared to the City, a large percentage of Wasena's residents are young adults. The neighborhood has a smaller percentage of elderly residents.

**Table 2. Population Age Distribution:
Wasena and Citywide**

Age	Wasena		City of Roanoke	
	Persons	Percentage	Persons	Percentage
0-19	370	23%	23,455	25%
20-34	477	29%	20,146	21%
35-64	633	39%	35,750	38%
65 and over	153	9%	15,560	16%
Total	1,633	100%	94,911	100%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census

In general, residents 25 years of age and over have more education than the citywide average. Over 59% of the residents have at least taken some college courses compared to only 46% citywide.

The majority of Wasena households earn more than the citywide household income annually. The average household income in Wasena is \$37,130 compared to \$30,719 citywide. Wasena has over half of its households earning between \$25,000 and \$50,000, while only 33% of the households citywide earn the same amount.

**Table 3. Educational Attainment,
25 Years of Age and over**

Education Level	Total	Percentage	City of Roanoke Avg.
Less than High School	191	18%	24%
High School	248	23%	30%
Some College	331	31%	21%
Associate's Degree	62	6%	6%
Bachelor's Degree	208	19%	12%
Graduate or Professional	33	3%	7%
Total	1073	100%	100%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census

Table 4. Household Income in 1999

Income Bracket	Wasena		City of Roanoke Avg.
	No. Households	Average	
\$0 - \$14,999	104	15.1%	22.7%
\$15,000 - \$24,999	63	9.2%	17.8%
\$25,000 - \$34,999	191	27.8%	16.1%
\$35,000 - \$49,999	154	22.4%	17.1%
\$50,000 - \$99,999	163	23.7%	21.3%
\$100,000 +	13	1.9%	5.0%
Total	688	100%	100%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 3

(Data based on Sample)

Neighborhood Organization

The Wasena Neighborhood Forum (WNF) is a member of Roanoke Neighborhood Advocates. The organization meets at Wasena Elementary School on the first Thursday of every month, with the exception of the summer season in July and August. Among its annual activities are a spaghetti dinner and a block party, both of which attract large numbers of residents. The organization also circulates a quarterly newsletter around the neighborhood to inform residents of various neighborhood news and upcoming events.



Staff held public workshops in conjunction with the Wasena Neighborhood Forum's monthly meetings at Wasena Elementary School.

